

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 7, 2017

Agenda Item: Gold Creek FAS Acquisition (R2)

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Min

Background

In 2012, FWP was allocated \$1,000,000 of funding through the NRDP to acquire and develop fishing access sites (FASs) on the upper Clark Fork River. Roughly \$850,000 has been designated for development with approximately \$150,000 set aside for acquisitions. Beginning in 2017, the goal is to add between 6-10 FASs to the Region 2 program over the next several years. Some sites will be new fee title purchases while others will hopefully be cooperative agreements with other agencies such as DNRC, BLM, and county government. All the sites would be located between Galen and Clinton. A small site (approximately 6 acres) in Gold Creek (near Garrison) has been identified as the first parcel to acquire and develop. In 2016, the commission endorsed acquiring the property with the goal of establishing a developed FAS. The department ordered an appraisal of the property which determined the appraised value to be \$64,000. The owner has agreed to sell at the appraised price and has signed, along with the department, a purchase agreement. Closing would be on or before June 30, 2017. Development could begin as early as fall of 2017.

Public Involvement Process & Results

A dual-purpose EA (acquisition and development) was developed for public review and comment with May 23, 2017 being the comment period deadline date. Comments favor the acquisition and development of the property. FWP is seeking final approval by the commission to acquire and develop the property.

Alternatives & Analysis

The commission could choose not to approve the Gold Creek site for purchase and development. This alternative would result in the overall acquisition and development on the upper Clark Fork being slowed or delayed. By not acquiring and developing the proposed property, the 31-mile river reach between Kohrs Bend and Drummond would remain devoid of a public launch site.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the commission approve the acquisition and development of the Gold Creek property as the property is located in a highly-desired river reach that currently lacks a developed public access site. By approving the acquisition and development of the site, FWP will have accomplished part of its plan to establish public FASs owned or managed by the department on the upper Clark Fork River.

Proposed Motion

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the acquisition and development of the Gold Creek property to establish a fully developed Fishing Access Site.